

"Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation."

John F. Kennedy • 35th President of the United States • 1917-1963



Compliments of
Jared Huffman
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 6TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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New 10/06

**Puzzles & Activities on
State AND Federal
Government!**

The OFFICIAL Government GUIDE BOOK

of the
California State
Assembly

Compliments of
Assemblymember
**Jared
Huffman**



California State Assembly
Jared Huffman

ASSEMBLY MEMBER, 6TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Student:

Our nation has three levels of government that pass laws that affect your lives. Do you ever wonder why you have to take the High School Exit Exam, or why all children under the age of 18 have to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle on public streets or trails? The California State Legislature is the governing body that enacts these and other laws. As an 8th grade student you have been studying about the Federal Government. **The purpose of this booklet is to compare and inform you of the role of the California State Government.**

The California State Legislature is divided into two bodies or “houses” – the Assembly and the Senate. The Assembly and the Senate each elect a leader. The leader of the Assembly is called the Speaker of the Assembly, and the leader of the Senate is called the President Pro Tem. Both the Assembly and the Senate meet in Sacramento, the State Capitol.

California has 80 Assembly Districts and 40 Senate Districts. Each of the 80 Assemblymembers and 40 Senators are elected to represent their constituents in the State Capitol. Term limits restrict the time that a legislator can stay in office. Voters can elect Assemblymembers three times to a two-year term, for a total of six years, and they can elect Senators twice for four-year terms, for a total of eight years.

There are several required steps before an idea can become a law. A bill can start in either the Assembly or the Senate. After it is written into the correct legal form, it is assigned to one or more committees where it is discussed and often amended. Members of the public can also come and comment on a bill in committee. A vote is taken in each committee, and if the bill passes, it goes to the Assembly floor or to the Senate floor for a vote of all members of that house. If it passes out of one house, then the bill goes over to the other house and the same process occurs again. For most bills, a simple majority vote is enough to pass, thus 41 out of the 80 votes in the Assembly, and 21 out of the 40 votes in the Senate.

If the bill passes out of both houses, then it goes to the Governor for action. If the Governor doesn't like the bill, then the Governor can veto the proposed law. If the Governor likes the bill, then the Governor can either sign the bill or not take any action during the required time period, in which case the bill automatically becomes a law.

Can you come up with any laws that you think would be good for the State of California? Use the information from this first page to get started. Have fun!


JARED HUFFMAN
Assemblymember, 6th District

Your Federal and State Representatives

Many constituents write letters and call their representatives to share their opinions on issues that matter to them. They can also contact them to request assistance with a state or federal agency or department, or suggest an idea for a new law. ***Find out who the representatives in your community are and how they can be reached.***

FEDERAL OFFICIALS:

U.S. Senator: *(Each State has two)*

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

U.S. Senator:

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

U.S. House of Representatives:

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

STATE OFFICIALS:

Governor:

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

State Senator:

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

State Assemblymember:

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Address: _____

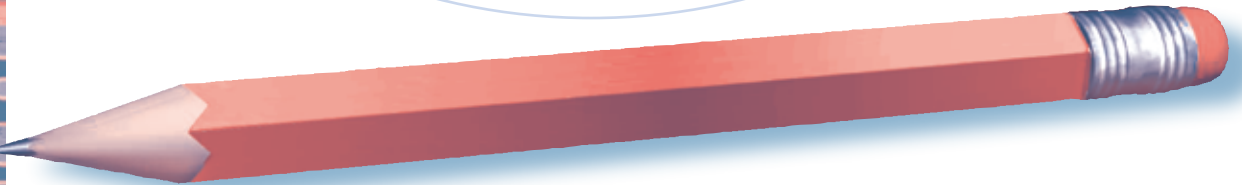
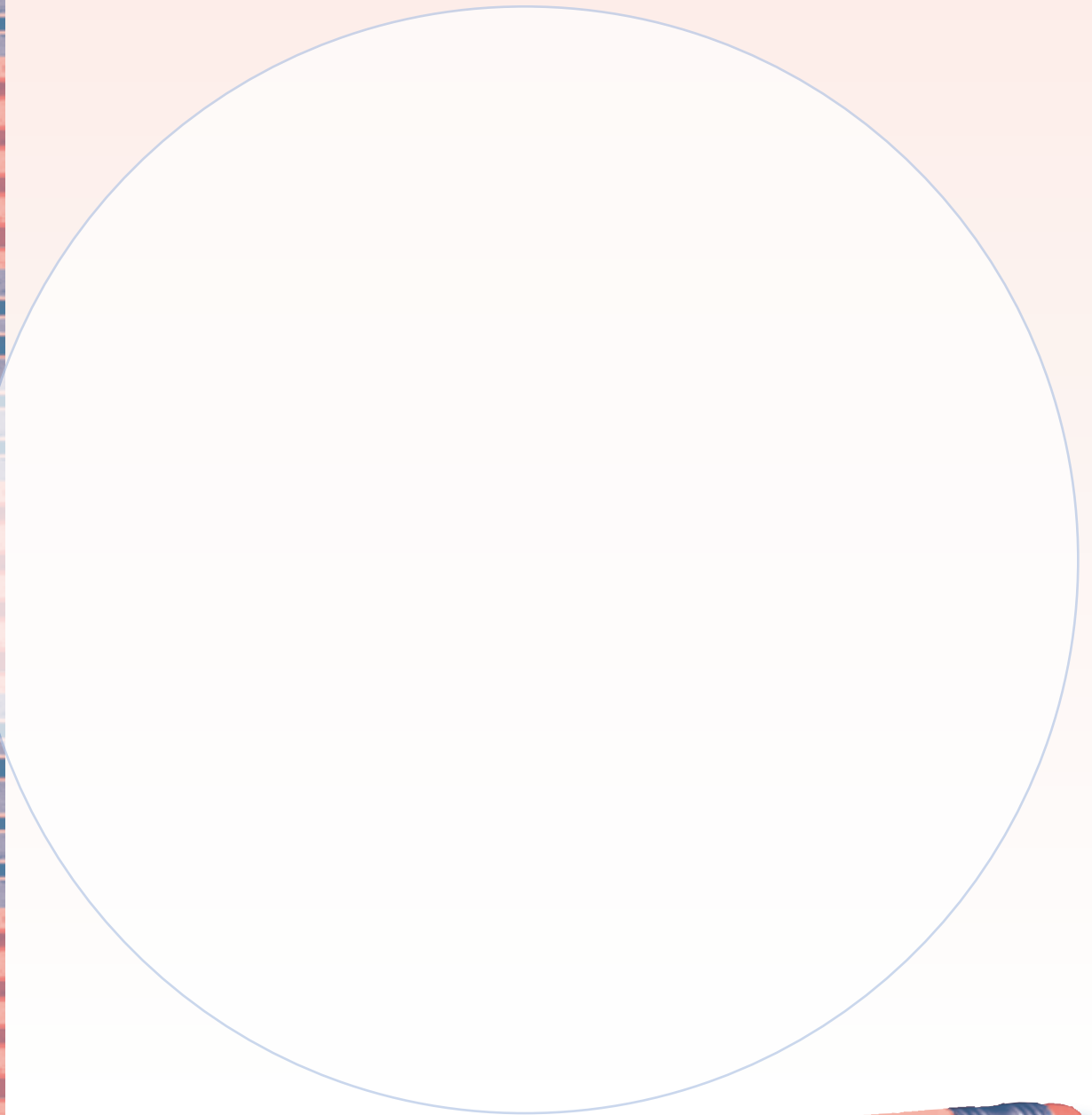
E-mail: _____

Some Helpful Tips:

- Federal and State officials numbers can be located in the phone book.
- **United States Senate** website: <http://www.senate.gov/>
- **United States House of Representatives** website: <http://www.house.gov/>
- **California State Government** website: www.ca.gov
- **California State Senate** website: www.senate.ca.gov
- **California State Assembly** website: www.assembly.ca.gov

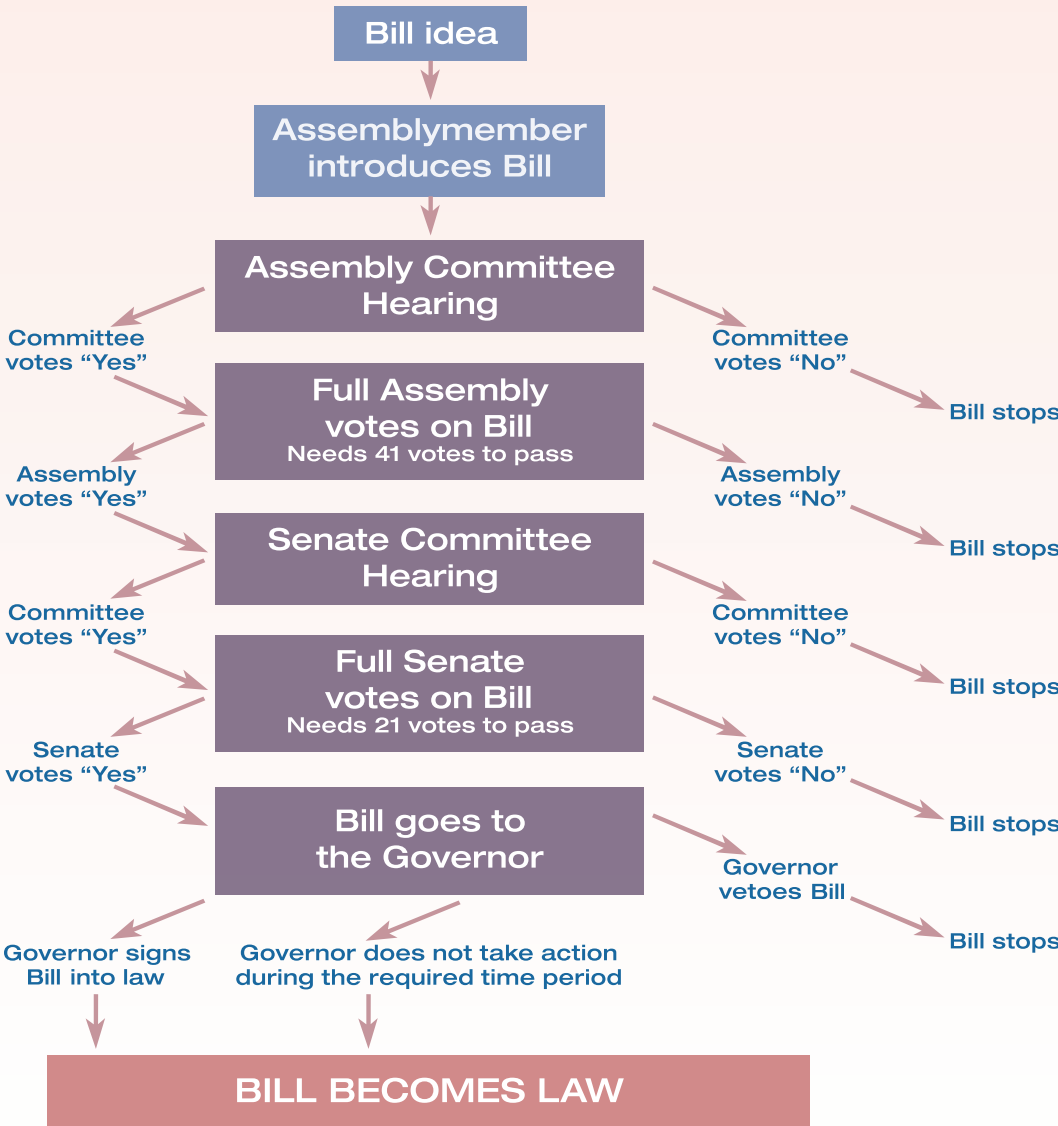
Draw A New Great Seal

Over the years, California has changed because of the growth in population and technology. If the Great Seal were designed today, it would probably look very different. What types of things represent California today? What should a new Great Seal tell people about California? *Draw a new Great Seal that shows the things you think make California special today.*



How a Bill Becomes a Law in California

These are the basic steps for a bill idea to become a law in California. In this example the bill idea will come from the Assembly. If it were a Senate bill, the process would start from the Senate side. As you review this process ask yourself some important questions: Will the committee members like your bill enough to send it to a full vote? Will enough legislators like your bill to vote for it when it is heard on the Assembly Floor? Will it pass the Senate? Will the Governor sign it into law? Will the Governor veto it?



It's a similar process in the Federal Government, except that the Legislative Branch is comprised of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Once the bill is passed in both houses, the President can sign or veto any proposed bill.

Create Your Own Bill Idea

One of the most exciting things about the California State Government is that the public can be involved in making laws. Ideas for a new bill can come from anyone including students. New laws can solve problems such as pollution or traffic safety. In the past few Sessions of the Legislature, several hundred bills have become laws. For example:

AB 1474 (Maze) – Provisional licensing program

Bans new teenage drivers during their first year from driving between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. unless accompanied by an adult 25 years of age or older or traveling to school, work or to a medical appointment.

AB 2268 (Caldera) – Bicycles: safety helmets

This bill requires children under the age of 18 to wear helmets when riding a bicycle.

AB 2901 (Pavley) – Hazardous waste: cellular telephone recycling

This bill requires retailers to take back obsolete cell phones at no cost to consumers for reuse, recycling, or proper disposal.

SBX1 2 (O’Connell) – Education accountability: high school exit examination

This bill requires California high school students to pass an exit exam to earn a high school diploma.

SB 677 (Ortiz) – The California Childhood Obesity Prevention Act

Restricts the sales of sodas to elementary and middle school students.

Now try to come up with a bill idea that would make a difference in your community and make California a better place to live.

In a few sentences, write your bill idea.

How would this bill benefit California?

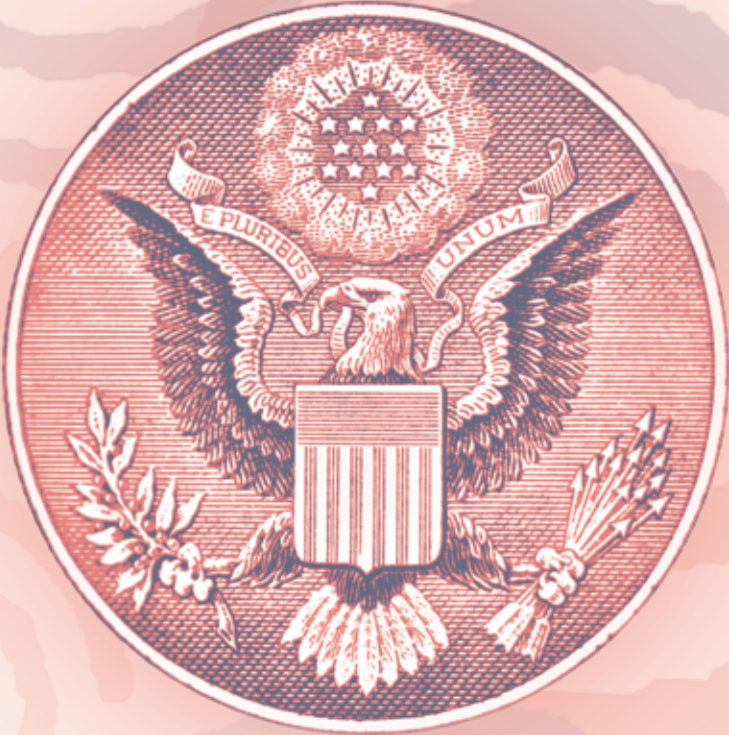
Who might support this bill and why?

Who might oppose this bill and why?

The Great Seal of the United States

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution authorizing a committee to devise a seal for the United States of America. This mission, designed to reflect the Founding Fathers’ beliefs, values, and sovereignty of the new Nation, did not become a reality until June 20, 1782.

Today, the Great Seal is used 2,000 to 3,000 times a year to authenticate the President’s signature on numerous official documents such as treaty ratifications, international agreements and communications from the President to heads of foreign governments.



- In the center of the seal is a bald eagle, our national bird.
- In the eagle’s beak is a scroll inscribed e pluribus unum, which is Latin meaning “out of many, one” and stands for one nation that was created from 13 colonies.
- In its talons the eagle grasps an olive branch representing peace, and 13 arrows representing war.
- The colors of the shield are those used in the flag of the United States of America. White signifies purity and innocence. Red signifies hardiness and valor. Blue signifies vigilance, perseverance and justice.
- Above the eagle are thirteen stars inside a circular design, representing a new constellation being created, referencing a new country being created from the thirteen colonies.

Great Seal Of The State Of California

Why does California have a seal? The Great Seal is like a team logo. Our Great Seal tells people much about the beginning of California. California's seal was adopted in 1849, and minor changes were made in 1937.



The Great Seal is more than just a beautiful picture. Everything in the seal has a special meaning. Find each one of the things that the designers of the seal wanted people to know about California.

- There are 31 stars in the sky because California was the 31st state admitted to the Union.
- Right under the 31 stars is the Greek word “Eureka.” It means “I have found it.” It refers to the gold that people found in California and to the new state that people had founded.
- In the foreground is the grizzly bear, which was common in California, with a sheaf of wheat on the ground to be crushed into flour for bread.
- The California Gold Rush started in 1849 and a miner can be seen swinging his pick. Beside him are a rocker and bowl used for panning gold.
- Ships that fill the harbor are symbols of the exports of gold and other exciting new things that would be found in California and shipped from the new state.
- The person holding a staff is the Roman Goddess Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, commerce and crafts, and the inventor of music. She represents California because she sprang to life full grown, just like California became a state without first being a territory.

Word Search

Can you find the following historical and government words in this jumble?
The words below may be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, upside down or backward. Good luck!

ASSEMBLY	BILL	CENSUS
CALIFORNIA	CAPITOL	CONSTITUENTS
CHIEF JUSTICE	GOLD RUSH	GOVERNOR
DISTRICTS	LAW	LEGISLATURE
JUDICIAL	SACRAMENTO	SENATE
POPULATION	SPEAKER	STATE SEAL
SESSION	VETO	VOTE
STATE SUPREME COURT	BILL OF RIGHTS	

T L I O E I C R S O S U S E T O H E H A
D A S S E M B L Y U S N L D S O S O O S
I L S T A T E S U P R E M E C O U R T H
S J E H A N O P R C T A C H C P R O S R
T A E G P T I V S M N U I N O S D T I N
R E C I I S E O T U I E E P N N L U I U
I L T R S S N S N L F S U N G L O E E D
C L S F A E L I E J S L D E R I G T T S
T I E O V M S A U A A L T A E R U N O E
S I V L E E E S T T L T I T S G S U I S
K C D L A E T N I U E E M D S C E L E N
E C E I C I A O T O R N S I T U R N R A
G S R B C E N E S O N E L O J N S R L S
E S P E A K E R N L G S G T U T C N U A
E L S L P B S R O E T L T S D C P A E G
S N S T I A E L C F S I R L I I S N E C
P O A L T V O R N I I D R R C L A A V A
E R L L O T O I E S W L A R I K N A N A
N N O G L C U T D O A O A C A O A U N C
N U A A H D S I S W N E R C L E E D R S

State Government Fill-in-the-Blank

Answer each by filling in the blank with the letter of the correct answer.
Some of the answers to these questions are scattered throughout the book, so look carefully. To help you get started, the answer to question #1 is “Sacramento” so fill in the letter “J.”

- 1. Our State Capitol is located in ____.
- 2. A proposed law is called a ____.
- 3. Every ten years a ____ is taken to determine our state’s population and to adjust legislative districts.
- 4. There are ____ Members in the State Assembly.
- 5. Each Assemblymember can serve up to three ____ year terms.
- 6. Prior to becoming part of the U.S., California was part of ____.
- 7. There are ____ Members in the State Senate.
- 8. The head of the Executive Branch is the ____.
- 9. A bill passes in the Assembly if it receives at least ____ votes, a simple majority.
- 10. The leader of the Assembly is called the ____.
- 11. Many people came to California during the ____.
- 12. Each Senator can serve for two ____ year terms.
- 13. The top of the Judicial Branch is the ____.
- 14. The Assembly and the ____ make up the Legislative Branch of Government.
- 15. Each legislator is elected to represent their ____ in our State Capitol.



State Capitol

ANSWERS:

- A. Speaker
- B. State Supreme Court
- C. Senate
- D. 80
- E. Spain and Mexico
- F. 40
- G. census
- H. two
- I. 41
- J. Sacramento
- K. four
- L. bill
- M. constituents
- N. Gold Rush
- O. Governor

Federal Government Fill-in-the-Blank

Answer each by filling in the blank with the letter of the correct answer.
Use each letter just once. To help you get started, the answer to question #1 is 100, so fill in the letter “B.”

- 1. There are ____ members in the U.S. Senate.
- 2. Each state has ____ Senators.
- 3. A Senator has ____ year terms.
- 4. You can register to vote at the age of ____.
- 5. The number of representatives each state has in the House of Representatives is determined by each state’s ____.
- 6. There are ____ members in the House of Representatives.
- 7. Each member of the ____ is elected to two-year terms.
- 8. There are ____ members of the U.S. Supreme Court.
- 9. The head of the Supreme Court is called the ____.
- 10. The three branches of the government are the Executive, Legislative and the ____ branch.
- 11. The first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution are called the ____.
- 12. A president may serve for two ____ year terms.
- 13. A president may ____ a bill to prevent it from becoming law.
- 14. If a president is ____ by the House of Representatives, the Senate will hold a hearing to decide if he/she will stay in office.
- 15. Another name for the House of Representatives is ____.

ANSWERS:

- A. Judicial
- B. 100
- C. Bill of Rights
- D. House of Representatives
- E. 435
- F. population
- G. nine
- H. veto
- I. impeached
- J. 18
- K. Chief Justice
- L. two
- M. Congress
- N. six
- O. four



Nation's Capitol